New York City Police Department Chokehold Decision Sparks Protests

New York, December 4 (RHC)-- Thousands of protesters took to the streets in the United States after a grand jury declined to indict a New York white police officer accused of killing a Black man by putting him in an illegal chokehold.

Demonstrations were held in several New York City locations on Wednesday after the Staten Island grand jury cleared white police officer Daniel Pantaleo in the July chokehold death of Eric Garner. A heavy police presence was seen in the city ahead of protests but there were no immediate reports of arrests.

Eric Garner, a 43-year-old African American and father of six, died after police wrestled him to the ground and pinned him down. According to the medical examiner's office, the cause of the death was "compression of neck (chokehold), compression of chest and prone positioning during physical restraint by police."

Garner was suspected of illegally selling cigarettes on the streets of New York City. The chokehold was captured live on an amateur video, showing the Black man screaming: "I can't breathe! I can't breathe!"

The controversial jury verdict comes just 10 years after another jury failed to indict a white officer who fatally shot an unarmed Black teenager in Ferguson, Missouri. Following that decision, violent protests against racial discrimination and police brutality in the United States broke out across the country.

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